

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of allocating predictable costs for consumable items of a laser system, comprising the steps of:

- 5               determining a predicted lifetime of one or more components of a laser system in terms of a countable parameter;
- estimating costs for the repair and/or replacement of the components in advance of their predicted failure; and
- scheduling the costs to be paid at one or more predetermined times.

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2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the countable parameter is selected from the group of parameters consisting of time, pulse count, accumulated input energy to a discharge of the laser system and number of processed workpieces.

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3. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of ordering in advance one or more replacement components for the one or more components predicted to fail.

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4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the one or more components includes at least one component from the group consisting of a laser tube, tube windows, a line-narrowing optical component, a line-narrowing module, a monitor optics module, a halogen filter, a pulser module and containers of a laser gas.

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5. The method of Claim 1, wherein the one or more components includes a line-narrowing module.

6. The method of Claim 1, wherein the costs are estimated to be an amount of the countable parameter multiplied by a cost per unit of the countable parameter.

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7. The method of Claim 6, wherein the countable parameter is selected from the group of parameters consisting of time, pulse count, accumulated energy input to a discharge of the laser system and number of processed workpieces.